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Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 03699 051306Z

53
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 EUR-12 IO-10 ACDA-10 OMB-01

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P R 051147Z MAR 75
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1318
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO DAI (DIA WASHDC)
CINCPAC
USSAG NAKHON PHANOM
AMEMBASSY SAIGON
AMEMBASSY PPLOM PENH
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

UNCLAS BANGKOK 3699

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR MARR, TH, US
SUBJECT: NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SECRETARY GENERAL'S COMMENTS
ON U.S. PRESENCE

REF: 3698 BANGKOK

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL SITTHI SAWETSILA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL, HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE MARCH 4. FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIALS USIS TRANSLATION OF HIS REMARKS ON THE AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND.

REPORTER: WHAT IS YOUR VIEW ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES WITHIN THE 18-MONTH TIME LIMIT?

SITTHI I HAVE GIVEN EXPLANATIONS IN A CABINET MEETING AND TO THE PRIME MINISTER ALREADY. IN OTHER WORDS, IT DEPENDS ON PROPER TIMING. FOR INSTANCE, WHEN THEY WERE WITHDRAWN FROM UBON WE HAD TO SEND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS TO MAKE A SURVEY FIRST OF WHAT CATEGORIES OF EMPLOYEES THERE WERE, WHAT MATERIEL THERE WAS, WHAT SURPLUS
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PAGE 02 BANGKO 03699 051306Z

THERE WAS, AND WHERE THOSE EMPLOYEES WOULD GO TO. SUFFI-

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

CIENT TIME HAD TO BE GIVEN THEM TO MAKE PRPARATIONS TO
REMOVE ELSEWHERE, THERE MUST BE PROPER TIMING IN ORDER
TO PREVENTS A VACUM BEING CAUSED SHOULD THE CHANGE BE
SUDDEN AND TOO QUICK.

REPORTER: DO YOU THINK THAT THE 18- MONTH TIME LIMIT
WILL BE SUFFICIENT?

SITTHI: IT WILL BE SUFFICIENT, BUT IT DEPENDS ON..

REPORTER: IF REGARDED FROM THE ANGLE OF OUR SECURITY?

SITTHI: LET US CONSIDER IN WHAT STATUS THEY HAVE COME
HERE. THEY SAY THEY CAME HERE AS A PREVENTIVE MEASURE
CONCERNED WITH SOUTH VIETNAM. OR SOEMTHING LIKE THAT.
BUT DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS AND AT PRESENT WHAT WE
MUST STUDY CONCERNS AID TO CAMBODIA. EVEN SHOULD THEY
REMAIN HERE NOW, THEY CAN NO LONGER FLY TO SOUTH VIETNAM
OR TO LAOS, OR TO CAMBODIA. THEREFORE, THE USEFULNESS WE OBTAIN
FROM THEIR PREVENTIVE MEASURES HAS COME TO AN
END. A GROUP OF AMERICAN SENATORS WHICH CAM E SAID THAT
IT SEEMS AS IF THE DURY TO CREATE CONFIDENCE IN PREVENTIVE
MEASURES HAS COME TO AN END. THEREFORE, IN REGARD
TO CAMBODIA, WE ARE WAITING AND WATCHING. IF THEY DO NOT
AID CAMBODIA, THEN THEIR CONTINUED PRESENCE HERE HAS NO
MEANING AT ALL. PREVENTIVE MEASURES MEAN MEASURES TO
ENSURE THAT THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT IN VIETNAM IS CONFORMED
TO. ISN'T THAT TRUE?

REPORTER: IN THAT CASE, THEIR WITHDRAWAL....

SITTHI: THESE MILITARY FORCES WHICH HAVE COME AND
BEEN STATIONED HERE HAVE NOT HELPED US IN THE SUPPRESSION
OF COMMUNIST TERRORISTS. THEY HAVE GIVEN US SOME AID TO
A SMALL EXTENT, SUCH AS HELPING TRANSPORT FOODSTUFFS TO
THE SOUTH DURING THE RECENT FLOODS. AMERICA INCURS EXPEN-
DITURE OF ABOUT 100 MILLION BAHT A YEAR FOR EACH BASE IT
HAS SET UP IN THAILAND. THEREFORE, SHOULD IT PULL OUT
SUDDENTLY THE PROBLEM FACING US WOJLD BE UNEMPLOYMENT.
THE PAY OF SECURITY GUARDS OF BASES TOTALS OVER 100 MILLION
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 BANGKO 03699 051306Z

BATH A YEAR. HAVE YOU SEEN HOW SECURITY GUARDS STAGED
A PROCESSION BECAUSE OF UNEMPLOYMENT WHEN WE LIQUIDATED
THE KHON KAEN BASE? UNEMPLOYMENT IS THE PROBLEM WE
MUST CONCENTRATE ON FINDING WAYS TO REMEDY.
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